

ACVETEO - ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT,  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYER OUTREACH

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
Thursday, March 26, 2015

SUMMARY MINUTES

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON  
VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, AND  
EMPLOYER OUTREACH (ACVETEO)

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Building  
Room 801  
1275 First Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C., 20002

ATTENDEES

Linda Bilmes

Wayne Boswell

Ross Cohen

Eric Eversole

Ryan Gallucci

Peter Gayton

Terry Gerton

Nancy Glowacki

Tim Green

Mike Haynie

Keith Kelly

Davy Leghorn

Dane Linn

David Quam

Darrell Roberts

Bob Simoneau

Mike Slater

Randy Smith

Mark Toal

Jim Walker

#### CALL TO ORDER

**Mr. Tim Green**, opened by introducing **Ms. Terry Gerton**, who thanked the assembled for their work on behalf of DoL VETS. She also indicated that **Assistant Secretary Keith Kelly** would be appearing later, and would be making some remarks to the committee. She informed everyone that **Secretary Kelly** would be retiring at the end of May, and encouraged everyone to offer any parting remarks to him during this meeting.

Further, **Ms. Gerton** thanked everyone on the committee for their hard work in developing the 2014 and recommendations, assuring all that they have been very helpful in determining a strategy for 2015, and "integral to the way we do business."

#### ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

**Mr. Green** detailed what he hoped to accomplish during the meeting, which included a discussion of the 2014 annual report and the recommendations which came from it, the Department of Labor's plans for tackling each of those recommendations, and the monitoring of them; a briefing by BLS; and a discussion of what the subcommittees should look like for 2015.

**Mr. Green** also introduced new members to the team, **Mr. Randy Smith** and **Mr. Mark Toal**.

#### DISCUSSION ON 2014 REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Mr. Smith** began outlining the first recommendation, the strategy to improve coordination, integration, and federal outreach efforts. One effort highlighted was the monthly intra-agency meetings of ATVETS (All Things Veteran) which is useful for forwarding the goal of this recommendation. Also highlighted was the inter-agency group within DoL that focuses on messaging and outreach. A handout was provided with additional information on these and other programs.

**Mr. Green** indicated that one initiative missing from the handout was one led by the Department of Energy to work with other Departments to promote employment opportunities for veterans within

the federal government.

**Mr. Smith** continued, outlining plans to develop a working group tasked with coordinating employers and veteran outreach efforts by federal and state departments.

Discussion followed, detailing what specific Departments were contributing toward this coordinated effort. Highlights included work with the Chamber of Commerce to determine strategies for promoting veteran employment within various industries; work within DoT to promote veteran hiring in the trucking, maritime, and rail industries; DoE's interest in getting more veterans involved in the growing solar industry; and DoA's grant programs which encourage veterans to begin farming.

The second recommendation was regarding performance evaluation and assessment to support the team's improvement. The three recommendations from the committee were to include performance measures for vets programs that are unified, based on measure for joint initiatives with VA and DoD; to purposely enhance efforts to connect veterans to employers; and to leverage a comprehensive performance evaluation assessment program, as it relates to LVERs.

DoL concurred, and asked that all committee members submit thoughtful feedback regarding the NPRM during the upcoming comment period beginning 3 April. Discussion followed regarding efforts such as performance measures for business services and adult education opportunities with federal and state agencies and across the private sector.

The third recommendation was to focus strategy to engage small and medium-sized employers related to veteran employment. The committee's recommendations included a strategic outreach plan on veteran employment and an initiative and effort to identify and highlight best practices of SMEs at the national level in support of veteran employment. The DoL indicated it had several success stories and was trying to help identify employers who stood out in this regard. Within their communications strategy, DoL intended to highlight some of those employers that play that key role in getting veterans jobs.

**Ms. Terry Gerton** indicated that, while more could certainly be done, the Department of Labor has engaged in a number of joint activities with the TAP interagency council to make the small business community aware of training opportunities. She pointed out that because many businesses don't have their own training budgets, leveraging training opportunities for them is of vital importance.

**Ms. Linda Bilmes** raised the issue of entrepreneurship opportunities and increasing the level of training for those who have the desire and the skills, but no training in the particulars of starting a business. **Mr. Mike Haynie** pointed out the Boots to Business program, and its success in promoting entrepreneurs among veteran population. SBA and its efforts in this arena was also mentioned, as were state-led initiatives, including a NASWA conference to be held for veterans this summer in Washington, D.C.

The fourth recommendation was regarding online curriculum, the public facing, to ensure that not only the transitioning service members and spouses, but also the veterans had access to that information. DoL was asked to take a look at the data to inform the effectiveness of it, and then enact a strategy to ensure the continuation of access to the online curriculum.

The Department concurred with this recommendation. Their action will be to ensure everyone at the state workforce agencies, the AJCs, understands where to find the curriculum, and to continue to look at the metrics of the effectiveness of the online curriculum by use of tools such as the voluntary DoD assessment survey.

The fifth recommendation regarded the off-base transition training pilot program, analysis and effectiveness of the pilot, and future course of action. **Ms. Gerton** informed the committee of successes that some of the states -- particularly California -- were having with their classes, and suggested that improvements might be made to others' programs by focusing attention on those with best outcomes for veterans. Further discussion was held on opportunities to leverage with the private sector to further the committee's mission.

The sixth recommendation dealt with the continuous audit of the current curriculum. The Department concurs, and has a contract to independently evaluate the impact of attendance on the employment workshop. Additionally, in Fiscal Year 2014, DoL, as a member of the TAP senior steering group curriculum working group, conducted an audit of the DoL workshop. Recent updates are opportunities under ADA; Veterans Employment Centers; WIOA training; help for dislocated workers; and registered apprenticeship programs. Also expressed by **Mr. Mark Toal** was the intention to have representatives from ACVETEO be part of the curriculum review for the Department of Labor employment workshop.

Next, **Ms. Nancy Glowacki** addressed a new set of recommendations dealing with employment and training activities impacting focused populations. Recommendation number seven was that the Department should initiate an audit and critical review of all outreach and messaging programs and practices, and take corrective action where required. The Department concurred. **Ms. Glowacki** highlighted ATVET once again, and indicated that the group would be used in 2015 to conduct an inventory of all DoL programs which impact veterans to help the Department determine if and where corrective action might need to be taken on agency programs.

Recommendation number eight was that the Department should initiate leveraging both internal and external private-sector resources and partners, a comprehensive research program focused on identifying the particular employment-related challenges in transition, which will include a specific plan of action indicating how the research findings will be leveraged to inform changes, if required. Again, the Department concurred, and will be conducting an internal review of all current methods of research and study, allowing them to evaluate areas where either enhanced direction and/or improvement is needed, gap analysis and research and analysis, and also to determine if there is a need to create a veterans research program manager position within VETS to coordinate and facilitate all inter-agency studies.

Recommendation number nine addressed the initiation of a review of programmatic flexibility to serve special populations, particularly with a gap analysis. Special focus would be given to instances where the review suggests programmatic flexibility would be useful, but does not currently exist. Those instances would be considered for administrative or legislative action. The Department concurred. It was pointed out that VETS does currently work with other agencies throughout the Department to leverage the employment programs and services for veterans.

In terms of actions on this recommendation, they will include conducting an evaluation of existing programs, particularly a gap analysis, to see if there are areas where the Department could more effectively incorporate the provision of services for focused populations, and reporting back to the committee on that gap analysis, including the inventory of the programs evaluated, the projection of any impacts regarding the services provided, and where corrective actions may be needed to address or correct the gaps.

Recommendation number 10 was that the Department should direct the BLS to work with the ACVETEO, as well as representatives from the Census Bureau and Department of Veterans Affairs, to craft future recommendations related to enhancements in the nature and frequency of veteran-related data collection. Ultimately, the Department concurs. **Ms. Glowacki** reminded the committee that BLS would be briefing them later in the day on the current nature and frequency of the veteran employment data collection, including sample size and statistical significance. She encouraged them to give careful consideration during lunch to the questions that might be asked in order to clarify certain data and the inevitable questions that come up when trying to interpret them.

**Ms. Bilmes** raised a concern she has raised with BLS in the past, regarding the small sample size used in determining statistics for women veterans, and the fact that such a small sample size does not ensure any kind of accuracy in determinations made from them.

The eleventh recommendation was for the Department to develop an intentional and specific communication campaign focused on

educating employers related to women in the military, with a particular focus toward mitigating stigma and undermining stereotypes. The Department concurred with this recommendation. **Ms. Glowacki** indicated that plans are in place to work with partners at both DoD and VA to develop a focused communication campaign which would include educating employers on the strengths of women veterans in the civilian workplace. **Ms. Glowacki** discussed further efforts at the Department to educate employers on the strengths of women veterans, including the #vetslikeher campaign, Blackstone's veteran playbook, and others.

Recommendation number 12 read that the Department should develop a strategy to build upon the local community partnerships and outreach established for other programs such as HVRP and, in partnership with the VA's SSVF program, to establish local and regional support networks for women veterans related to workforce training, skills development, and employment. The Department concurred, in principle. With the limited resources it has available, the Department intends to take certain actions. **Ms. Glowacki** indicated a desire that the committee would come back, if desired, with more enhanced recommendations if they see fit.

Specifically, the Department intends to enhance: incorporating the focused populations into their strategic communications plan; working with regional and state representatives to ensure that they are partnering with the local community resources for those focused populations; and reporting back to the committee on the current work being conducted, to give a better idea of what currently exists.

REMARKS BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

OF THE VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE

**Assistant Secretary Keith Kelly** addressed the committee, announcing his imminent retirement, and thanking them for their service over the years. He indicated his belief that achievements have been considerable during his tenure, and that ACVETEO has played an important part in reaching those achievements.

BLS BRIEF ON THE 2014 EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF VETERANS

**Mr. Jim Walker**, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, briefed the committee on data that are available regarding employment and non-employment statistics for veterans. The data specifically highlighted are from the Bureau's March newsletter. **Mr. Walker** began by instructing the committee on where the data comes from, in order that they can understand everything in the appropriate context. He also instructed everyone on how to make appropriate comparisons to other data, taking into account seasonal and other adjustments that impact monthly figures. It is always wisest, he cautioned, to use the annual, rather than monthly, numbers.

**Mr. Ryan Gallucci** raised a concern regarding the number of retirement-aged veterans in the survey, which create a skewed picture of the actual veterans out of work, considering that many of them are not intending to be a part of the workforce. **Mr. Walker** repeated the importance of looking at all the detail in the data before making any evaluations regarding it.

**Ms. Bilmes** reiterated her concern regarding the small sample size of women veterans. Her concern is that the data collected don't allow for any statistically significant conclusions to be made regarding that particular focused population. **Mr. Walker** shared the concern, indicated that part of the problem was a matter of limited resources, while some of the problem was that women simply don't make up a large-enough percentage of veterans at this point. In the future their growing numbers will ensure a more sizeable sample. He suggested that projects such as the National Longitudinal Survey may provide good vehicles in order to collect more data on women veterans. Other surveys discussed were the Current Population Survey and the American Community Survey.

SUBCOMMITTEES DEVELOP FISCAL YEAR 2015 WORK PLAN

**Mr. Green** began by soliciting input regarding the three current subcommittees and the desired plan, going forward. **Mr. Haynie** expressed his concerns about coming to any conclusions without a broader representation of the committee present.

Many members present concurred with this point of view, and the consensus was to wait for a future meeting, possibly by telephone, to decide on which subcommittees will be formed and what their plans of action will be in 2015.

**Mr. Greg Green** was tasked with disseminating possible dates and locations for the next meeting.

#### PUBLIC FORUM

There were no comments from the public offered.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.